

REMARKS

This Response is submitted in response to the Non-final Office Action mailed August 19, 2005. A petition for a two month extension of time is also submitted. A check in the amount of \$225 is enclosed to cover the cost of the two month extension of time. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required in the Application to Deposit Account No. 02-1818. Please reference number 116347-002 if such a withdrawal is made.

Claims 7, 8 and 10-26 are pending in this application.

Claims 10-16 stand allowed.

Claims 7, 8, and 17-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by *Franks Jr.* (US 4,780,096) or under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Auclair* (US 5,131,856) in view of *Franks Jr.* (US 4,780,096). Claims 7, 8, and 17-26 as currently amended overcome *Franks Jr.* and *Auclair*, alone and in combination.

Specifically, each of claims 7, 8, and 17-26 as currently amended recites “wherein the integral curved surface rotates synchronously with the securing stud mechanism.” In other words, the curved surface is part of the stud and rotates with the stud when the stud is tightened into the holes of the strap. Neither *Franks Jr.* nor *Auclair* teach this feature.

Specifically, the curved surface 35a of *Franks Jr.* is not integral to the stud 30. The curved surface 35a of *Franks Jr.* is a separate piece from the stud 30. As a result, the curved surface 35a of *Franks Jr.* does not rotate with the stud 30. Instead, “[w]hen the stud 30 is turned, the uppermost curved plate 35a, being positioned upon the unthreaded shank portion 31 of the stud 30, is maintained in a fixed position while the stud 30 rotates relative thereto.” (*Franks Jr.* col. 3, ll. 34-37)

Similarly, the curved surface 64 (of platen 60) of *Auclair* is not integral to the stud 42. The platen 60 (which includes the curved surface 64) of *Auclair* is a separate piece from the stud 42. As a result, the platen (and the curved surface 64) of *Auclair* does not rotate with the stud 42. Instead, “The platen 60 is dimensioned so that the ends 66 and 68 engage the retainer flanges 30 and 32 to limit angular rotation of the platen as the platen is tightened against the strap.” (*Auclair*. col. 4, ll. 2-6)

Because *Franks Jr.* and *Auclair*, alone and in combination, do not teach or suggest each feature of claims 7, 8, and 17-26, Applicant submits that these claims are in condition for allowance.

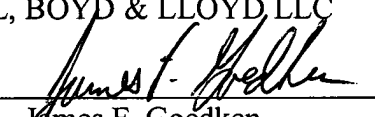
An earnest endeavor has been made to place this application in condition for formal allowance, and in the absence of more pertinent art, such action is courteously solicited. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this Response, applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner contact the undersigned.

If there are any questions or comments, the Examiner can contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

BELL, BOYD & LLOYD LLC

BY



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Dated: January 19, 2006